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GSU View

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News and Events

Understanding State Pension Reform

More than 150 faculty and staff Tuesday heard Dr. Steven Cunningham of Northern Illinois University explain ongoing pension reform efforts in Illinois, and how current proposals will affect state university employees.

Tuesday's forum is one of a series of meetings on pension reform taking place at many Illinois public universities. President Maimon gave a brief update on efforts by state university presidents and chancellors, on behalf of their employees, to find the best solution to the current pension crisis. As convener of the public university presidents and chancellors, she and other presidents met recently in Springfield with Governor Quinn's top staff members and key state legislators to encourage a full analysis of pension reform that would protect employees, the universities, and the state.

During his presentation, Dr. Cunningham related the history of public pension funding in Illinois, and how pensions have become increasingly underfunded in recent years. The state's unfunded public pension obligation has climbed from \$15 billion in fiscal year 2000 to \$85 billion in fiscal year 2010, he said.

According to Dr. Cunningham, there are four options for stabilizing the state pension systems:

- Continue into an unprecedented funding crisis, with unpredictable results.
- Amend the Constitution to weaken the Pension Protection Clause.
- Statutorily reduce benefits for current participants, leading to extended litigation and uncertainty.
- Establish an alternative funding model to reduce the unsustainable burden on the state budget.

There are currently 20 pension reform bills pending in the Illinois General Assembly. President Maimon urges university employees to follow the debate and to communicate with legislators as this matter is discussed in Springfield.

You can read Dr. Cunningham's [Power Point](#) presentation.

Student Senate Winners

Results have been announced in the 2012 GSU Student Senate elections.

Winners in the recent online voting are:

Lisa Wallace, COE – President

Erin Fletcher, CAS – Board of Trustee Representative

Brandon Sanders, CAS – IBHE Representative



CAS

Christopher Apata– Senator
Codjo Padonou– Senator

CBPA

Valencia Brown– Senator
Regina Hayes– Senator

CHHS

Lydia Quinones– Senator

IDSS

Betty Campbell – Senator

Senators at Large

Irma Gonzalez Pita, CBPA
Shawnta Young, CBPA
Darren Heldt, CBPA (Write-in)
Eric Williams, CAS (Write-in)
John Hosty, CAS (Write-in)
Imani Aloway, CAS (Write-in)

The 2012 Online Voting System for Governors State University is monitored and tabulated by Votenet Solutions, an independent firm.

Workshop Targets General Education Planning

Faculty and staff are invited to “Innovation and Creativity in General Education,” a March 27 workshop that focuses on GSU’s General Education planning. The workshop takes place from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on the Center for Performing Arts stage, and will include lunch.

RSVPs are essential for the workshop. Participants will be assigned seats at onstage tables and lunch will be served. Interested persons should RSVP to [Penny Perdue](#) at 708.534.4130 by March 23.



Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities is the featured speaker. She will discuss the national framework and best national practices of General Education.

The purpose of the event is to provide members of the university’s General Education Working Group with input so they can create the GE outcomes statements and recommend the structure for lower division General Education courses, as well as any upper division courses that may fall in that category.

Workshop sessions will concentrate on topics related to General Education at GSU:

- Concepts that guide GSU’s General Education program
- Relating LEAP outcomes to GSU’s General Education planning
- Exploring high impact learning practices and how they may be integrated into GSU’s General Education and first-year experiences

Participants also will discuss a GE Working Group timeline and a possible first-year kickoff event in the week before freshmen start classes in Fall, 2014.

Before the workshop, participants will be asked to do some pre-work on exercise sheets dealing with General education outcomes, themes, and high impact learning.

We urge you to attend and participate in this significant campus event.

Rapid Research Reports

Students, faculty, and staff will have the opportunity to hear what GSU professors and colleagues are working on at the faculty "rapid research" event on Friday, March 9, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Hall of Honors. These rapid overviews of the research and developments taking place in our community illustrate our diverse interests and inquiring minds.

Present your research and hear what your colleagues are working on. Some highlights of rapid presentations include Stone Soup Project: Restorative Justice in the South Suburbs; Disaster Preparedness and Training in Illinois; Using Motion Capture to Measure Functional Changes in Children with CP; The Advantages of Using Nanoparticles for Drug Delivery; Policy Implications of Addiction as a Brain Disease; National Studies on Social Workers' Unprofessional Conduct and Sanctioning Patterns of State Licensing Boards; Phenomenon of Student Active Class Participation in MOT; and Sexual and Behavioral Health Intervention Development.

Presentations will take place from 10 a.m. to noon. Lunch will be served from noon to 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Please RSVP to [Raven James](#) with the topic of your research, and/or to confirm your attendance at the event. The event is sponsored by GSU's Scholarship and Teaching Center.

Commencement Participation

GSU Commencement ceremonies are fast approaching. Faculty and staff are asked to confirm their participation and reserve their regalia. Participation and regalia order forms are due by March 14.

Link to [participation and regalia order forms](#).

Please return the forms to the Advancement Office, room D34200. For more information, contact [Erin Markase](#) at ext. 2832.

Student Speakers 2012

The Commencement Student Speaker Committee is currently accepting nominations for the commencement ceremony to be held on Saturday, May 19. This year we will hold two ceremonies: at 10 a.m. for CAS and CBPA graduates, and at 5 p.m. for CHHS and COE graduates.

As a result, we will select two commencement speakers, one for each ceremony. We need candidates who represent all colleges, so please make a concerted effort to nominate deserving students for this prestigious honor.

Please complete both nomination forms and send them to [Sheree Sanderson](#) no later than March 28. Please note that nominees must be available for an interview on Friday, April 6, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Link to [nomination forms](#).

Union Street Gallery Show Features GSU Artists

Six GSU artists are participating in *Botanic/Organic*, the current exhibit at Union Street Gallery in Chicago Heights. The show takes place through March 31 at the gallery, 1527 Otto Boulevard.

Contributing to *Botanic/Organic* are GSU alumni Margie Glass-Sula, Brooke Nicholson, Lori White, and Jason Walker; current graduate student Luis Sahagun; and Associate Professor of Art Javier Chavira, who is also a GSU graduate.

Sahagun received an honorable mention for his piece. Elizabeth Whiting, curator for the Union League Club in Chicago, curated the show.

"It is extremely gratifying that so many of our students made the cut to be part of this nationally juried show," Chavira said. "Through the years, many of our students have participated in juried exhibitions at Union Street and I am extremely gratified to have this little gem of a place right next door in Chicago Heights."

Admission to Union Street Gallery is free. For gallery hours, or more information on the show, contact [Union Street Gallery](#) at 708.754.2601.

You can read a [review](#) of *Botanic/Organic* in the NWI Times.

Criminal Justice Career and Internship Fair 2012

The Criminal Justice Career and Internship Fair will be held on March 22, from 3 to 6 p.m., in the Hall of Governors.

Current students, alumni, and community members are invited to attend. Potential employers are also invited to register as participants. This is an opportunity to match jobs and internships positions with qualified personnel. This event is free and open to the public.

Towels and Linens Collection

Donate clean, used towels and linens to help a good cause. The GSU Wellness Club has teamed with the Friends of Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago for a towel and linen drive at GSU. The donations will help the foundation provide programs and services for more than 130,000 Chicagoland residents affected by epilepsy.

Purple Friends of Epilepsy Foundation donation barrels are located near the elevators in the Hall of Governors and in Student Life, room A2100.

For more information, contact [Vanessa Newby](#) at 708.534.4551.

How to Paint at GSU

The Visual Arts Gallery presents "Ways of Making: Painting" from March 9 through 30. The exhibit will feature the artwork of 25 painters, all women, in recognition of the 25th year of Women's History Month. A closing reception celebrating the artists will be held on Wednesday, March 28, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public.

Gallery Director Jeff Stevenson and Guest Curator Dolores Mercado,



of the National Museum of Mexican Art, invited artists who represent a diversity of working styles, career stages, and subject matter.

"This exhibit seeks to enhance the classroom experience for our students as well as provide a wonderful cultural experience to our extended and growing community outside of the university," said Stevenson.

The Visual Arts Gallery is open Mondays and Wednesdays, from 5 to 7 p.m.; Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 1 to 9 p.m.; Fridays, from 5 to 9 p.m.; and by appointment.

For more information, visit www.govst.edu/gallery.

Keys to Good Health

Learn the keys to good health at a series of workshops sponsored by the GSU Wellness Club. Workshops are presented by the Health on Earth Wellness Centers and are designed to help students, faculty, and staff improve their health and wellness.

The series begins with *Manage Stress Before It Manages You* on March 21, at 3 p.m., in the Center for Performing Arts lobby.

Learn how to add activity to a sedentary work day in *Stay Fit While You Sit* on March 28, at 1:30, in the Center for Performing Arts lobby.

On April 4, you can learn how to give yourself a hand at a workshop on Carpal Tunnel Syndrome at 1:30 p.m. in the Center for Performing Arts lobby.

The final workshop addresses good health and longevity in *10 Keys to Longevity*, on April 24, at 1:30 p.m.

Social Work Awareness Month 2012

In recognition of Social Work Awareness Month, GSU is sponsoring a series of presentations, workshops, and events.

Impact of Trauma and Possible Solutions for Women Involved in the Legal System, including Incarceration for Nonviolent Crimes will be presented by Jo Ann Smith, MSW, LCSW, on Wednesday, March 14, at 5:30 p.m. The presentation will take place at Corazon Community Services, 5339 W. 25th St., Cicero. It is free to members of the National Association of Social Workers. There is a \$10 fee for non-members seeking CEUs.

A Social Work Employment Panel will offer students the opportunity to learn about various options for social work practice. The discussion will be led by GSU Addictions Studies Lecturer Mark Sanders, LCSW. The discussion is on Tuesday, March 20, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., in Engbretson Hall. This event is free.

Events continue with a panel discussion on the causes and effects of trauma on Tuesday, March 20, from 4:30 to 7 p.m., in Sherman Hall. Panelists include Dr. Wendy Westbrooks, a clinical physician, radio talk show host, and health/wellness coach; and representatives from the Red Cross, the Veteran's Administration, Rape Victim Advocacy, and National Disaster Relief organizations. This discussion is free.

The GSU community has the opportunity to take part in a special reception with David "Sonny" Lacks on Monday March 26, from 5 to 7 p.m. Lacks, who will be speaking at GSU the following day, will be available to sign the book, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, which details how his mother's cells were used without her permission for medical research. Registration for the reception is required by March 16, at www.govst.edu/Sonny_Lacks_Reception.

This event is free and sponsored by the GSU Intellectual Life Committee, the College of Health and Human Services, and the College of Education.

Lacks will speak on Tuesday, March 27, at 1:30 p.m., in the Center for Performing Arts. Online registration is required by March 20, at www.govst.edu/Henrietta_Lacks/. This event is free and sponsored by the GSU Intellectual Life Committee, the College of Health and Human Services, and the College of Education.

Social work students and those interested in social issues will have the opportunity to let their opinions known to Illinois legislators on Social Work Advocacy Day. Students, faculty, and community members will be in Springfield on March 29. For more information, contact Darwin Gordon, president of the Social Work Student Organization at dgordon2@student.govst.edu.

For information about the events of Social Work Awareness Month, contact [Jo Anne Smith](#) at 708.235.2233.

Earth Day Award Honors Environmental Activism

GSU's Sustainability Committee is seeking nominations for the first-ever Earth Day Award.

The award, to be announced at the university's Earth Day celebration on April 19, recognizes a member of the university community who has demonstrated exceptional leadership, pioneering contributions, and innovations in four areas:

- Grass roots activism – mobilizing individuals in response to environmental problems
- Service – working on committees that have a mission related to sustainability.
- Education – involvement in organized efforts to teach how natural environments function and how people can manage their behavior and ecosystems to live sustainably.
- Research – making a substantial contribution in advancing knowledge about sustainability.

Any person formally associated with GSU is eligible for the Earth Day Award, including current degree-seeking students, alumni, staff, faculty, administrators, and retirees.

Nominations are due March 29 and should be submitted to [Sheree Sanderson](#) in Student Life (A2103). An ad hoc committee of students affiliated with the Student Senate will determine the award recipient.

Holistic Health Presentations

Learn about holistic health at a daylong conference on March 31, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The conference includes presentations, demonstrations, and exhibits of holistic and healthful products and services. Vendors and exhibitors will fill the Hall of Governors with information, products, and services related to holistic health. Presenters include Dr. Wendy Westbrooks, Bi Nah Davis, Kim Simmons, and Tom Masbaum and Linda Nyberg.

Dr. Westbrooks is a clinical physician, health and wellness coach, entrepreneur, and radio talk show host. Dr. Westbrooks will present on the importance of a healthy lifestyle and identifying potentially unhealthy conditions in our lives and our communities.

Bi Nah Davis will present a seminar on modern day stress as it relates to bio-energy and mind-body communication focusing on the colors in one's energy field and how the intensity and strength of the colors reflect the health and wellness of the individual.

Kim Simmons will present a stress release workshop focusing on the transformative power of exercise and nutrition.

Tom Masbaum and Linda Nyberg will present on the use of Emotional Freedom Techniques in the treatment of emotional and physical problems.

This event is free and sponsored by Student Life and the GSU Wellness Club.

Continuing Education Units are available for persons attending the seminar on massage therapy and reflexology. Exhibitor/vendor space is still available.

For more information, contact [Vanessa Newby](#) at 708.534.4551.

GSU Science Students present at STEM Conference

Even as the university's science education facilities undergo a \$22.6 million dollar renovation, GSU students are excelling in their studies.

Four GSU undergraduate students recently presented their research at the 2012 Spring Symposium and Student Research Conference in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), held in Chicago.

Anthony Stulgate, of Country Club Hills, won first place in the undergraduate computer science oral presentations. His winning presentation was on his research into "Protein Expression Transformation Analysis System."

Biology student Felicia Krelwitz, of Plainfield, won third place in the undergraduate environmental science oral presentations for her research entitled, "Microbial Analysis of Runoff from Governors State University Retention Ponds and Potential Impact on the Thorn Creek Watershed."



Marlon Berry, of Richton Park, presented his chemistry research on "Photodynamic Therapy for Prostate Cancer." Biology student Rodney Balitewicz, of Chicago,

presented his research on the "Utilization of Microbial Biology in Aquatic Sediment for Microbial Fuel Cell Energy Production."

"Presenting at conferences provides a valuable learning experience. Our students are able to share their research with other students and faculty, as well as learn from the research of others," said Dr. Mary Carrington, Professor of Biology. "We are very proud of their achievement."

At the conference, students were accompanied by Dr. Carrington, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Coordinator at GSU; Dr. Tim Gsell, Professor of Microbiology and faculty mentor; and Dr. Soon-Ok Park, Academic Coordinator of Computer Science and faculty mentor.

Language Training for Kids

Free, one-on-one language instruction for qualified middle school children is being provided by Governors State University as part of a research study. All instruction is conducted by a certified, trained speech-language pathologist.

The summer language intervention program provides one or two hours of instruction per week for nine weeks. Instruction focuses on building knowledge of advance sentences that are important for reading comprehension, writing, following verbal instructions, and verbal expression in middle school and beyond.

Participation is based on eligibility screening, which takes place in March and April. Students must have a documented language or learning disability, be between 10 and 14 years old, have normal hearing, and meet certain reading and language criteria.

The Summer Language Program is part of a language treatment study supported by a grant from the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. The study is designed to train speech pathologists in effective language development techniques and to examine their effectiveness on student learning.

Transportation to and from the university is not provided. For more information, and to register your child for evaluation, contact [Dr. Catherine Balthazar](#) at 708.534.4592.

Scholarship Spotlight – Chris Boylan



Chris Boylan of Crete received the Scholarship for Finance and Accounting Students. He is an undergraduate student in Accounting.

Chris is a laborer working for a local contractor. He believes that an ethical person will do what is right because it is right, not for any other motive.

